

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1229
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
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AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMCONSUL GENOA
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMCONSUL PALERMO
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY
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SUBJECT: DISAFFECTION AMONG THE THREE LABOR CONFEDERATIONS

REF: ROME 4270

1. SUMMARY. THE POLEMICS WITHIN THE ITALIAN LABOR MOVEMENT,
TOUCHED OFF BY A CISL ACCUSATION (JOINED TO A LESSER EXTENT
BY THE UIL) THAT THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED CGIL HAS BEEN EX-
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PLOITING LABOR UNITY TO ADVANCE COMMUNIST PARTY INTERESTS,
ARE CONTINUING AT A HIGH PITCH. THE SITUATION IS BEING
DESCRIBED AS THE MOST SERIOUS BREACH IN LABOR RANKS SINCE
THE FOUNDING OF "LABOR UNITY", IN THE FORM OF THE FEDERATION
CGIL-CISL-UIL (CCU), IN 1971. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF EACH OF THE THREE CONFEDERATIONS WILL CONVENE NEXT
WEEK TO DISCUSS THE SITUATION.

2. THE USUALLY STRONG CLIMATE OF IRRITATION WITH, AND PUBLIC CRITICISM OF, THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED LABOR CONFEDERATION CGIL HAS FOLLOWED CISL CHIEF MACARIO'S ORIGINAL COMMENTS (REFTEL). IT IS A RESULT OF THE GROWING CONVICTION, ON THE PART OF CISL AND UIL LEADERS, THAT LABOR UNITY, RECENT POLICIES FOR AUSTERITY, THE ENTIRE LABOR MOVEMENT ITSELF, HAVE BRAZENLY AND CYNICALLY BEEN USED BY CGIL TO ACCOMPLISH THE ENTRY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY INTO THE GOVERNING MAJORITY, THE DEVELOPMENT WHICH NOW SEEMS LIKELY TO RESULT IN THE FORMATION OF A NEW GOVERNMENT. END SUMMARY.

3. AFTER A MEETING OF THE CISL SECRETARIAT, CISL SECRETARY GENERAL MACARIO, REPORTEDLY WITH THE BACKING OF DEPUTY SEC GEN CARNITI, HAS FOLLOWED UP HIS CRITICISMS WITH FURTHER ACCUSATIONS. HE HAS BEEN JOINED BY OTHER PROMINENT LABOR LEADERS, SUCH AS GIORGIO BENVENUTO, UIL SEC GEN, WHO HAS STATED THAT "WE CANNOT PERMIT THE POLICY OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT TO BE HEGEMONIZED BY ONE POLITICAL PARTY. ...THE TAP OF LABOR CONFLICTS CANNOT BE TURNED ON DEPENDING ON THE STRATEGIC INTERESTS AND TACTICS OF THIS OR THAT PARTY". CISL MINORITY LEADER MARINI HAS SAID THAT CGIL POLICIES SEEM TO US TOO CLOSELY TIED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE PCI." CISL MINORITY LEADER SARTORI WELCOMED THE BELATED RECOGNITION OF THE FACT THAT "TOO MUCH SPACE HAS BEEN CONCEDED TO THE CGIL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COMMUNISTS...A MATTER WE HAVE BEEN DENOUNCING FOR YEARS".

4. THE CGIL HAS BEEN PROMPTED TO ISSUE AN EXPRESSION OF ITS "CONCERN AND ASTONISHMENT" FOR "THE SUDDEN AND UNWARRANTED TISSUE OF POLEMICS" WHICH HAS BEEN LAUNCHED AGAINST IT BY THE CISL AND UIL. THE CGIL NOTE CALLS FOR A DISCUSSION OF THE MATTER "AT A LEVEL OF GREATER SERENITY" BUT WITHOUT "A MANICHEAN SPIRIT". CGIL DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL MARIANETTI (PSI) HAS COME TO THE DEFENSE OF HIS COMMUNIST COMRADES, SEEKING TO CALM THE WATERS AND MINIMIZE ANY SPLIT IN CCU RANKS.

5. THE COMMUNIST DAILIES, UNITA AND PAESE SERA, HAVE RESPONDED TO THE ATTACKS IN MORE VIGOROUS TERMS. UNITA ON MARCH 9 TALKS ABOUT "WORRISOME SYMPTOMS OF POLITICAL NERVOUSNESS" IN CERTAIN SECTORS OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT, COMPLAINS ABOUT DOUBLE STANDARDS. "WHEN ANY OTHER PARTY TAKES A POSITION ON LABOR MATTERS, IT DISCUSSES, POLEMICIZES, CONFRONTS OR OPPOSES", THE UNITA ARTICLE STATES. WHEN THE PCI TAKES A POSITION, "IT EITHER LIES OR EXPLOITS." UNITA THEN COMES TO THE HEART OF ITS POSITION: "WE CAN HARDLY BE ACCUSED OF BELIEVING THAT WE ALONE REPRESENT THE ENTIRE

WORKING CLASS (SINCE) WE HAVE MADE IT OUR STRATEGY TO HAVE ALLIANCES WITH DIVERSE POLITICAL FORCES, ANIMATED BY THE CONVICTION THAT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO RENOVATE OUR NATION AND CONDUCT IT TO SOCIALISM WITHOUT...A RAPPORT WITH BOTH THE SOCIALIST AND CATHOLIC COMPONENTS WHICH ARE GENEROUSLY REPRESENTED IN THE WORKING CLASS". UNITA ALSO POINTS OUT THAT "THE COMMUNISTS ARE THE ONLY ONES WHO ACCEPT NOT BEING REPRESENTED WITHIN THE LABOR MOVEMENT PROPORTIONATE TO OUR REAL STRENGTH AMONG THE MASSES".

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6. PAESE SERA, IN ITS EDITORIAL COMMENT ON MARCH 9, TURNS THE ARGUMENT AROUND THROUGH WELL-OILED DOUBLE-TALK: "IT SEEMS INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO ASSERT THAT THE LABOR MOVEMENT LOOKS SOLELY AT THE PROGRAMS IN ORDER TO JUDGE A GOVERNMENT, SHOWING ITSELF INSTEAD DEAF, DUMB AND BLIND...WITH RESPECT TO THE POLITICAL FORMULA WHICH IS

TO IMPLEMENT THEM". THE ARTICLE CONTINUES: "THE SUSPICION THAT TRADE UNION AUTONOMY CAN BE CONSIDERED VALID ONLY WHEN THE LABOR MOVEMENT 'DOES NOT PLAY THE GAME' OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COMMUNISTS IS MORE THAN JUSTIFIED. IT IS ODD INDEED THAT THE ACCUSATIONS OF BEING SUBORDINATE EPE MADE AGAINST CGIL PRECISELY WHEN THE PCI...IS HARVESTING THE FRUIT OF ITS POLICIES AND ITS STRENGTH IN THE NATION...AND WHEN THEY ARE MAKING THEMSELVES THE SPOKESMEN FOR THE RENOVATION DEMANDED BY THE ENTIRE LABOR MOVEMENT, INCLUDING THE CISL".

7. NONE OF THIS HAS DETERRED MACARIO FROM RENEWING HIS ATTACKS. IN THE TURIN DAILY LA STAMPA ON MARCH 10, MACARIO ASSERTS THAT, WHEN THE LABOR OFFER OF WAGE RESTRAINT AND COOPERATION IN AN AUSTERITY PRORAM WAS AGREED AMONG THE THREE CONFEDERATIONS IN ROME/EUR ON FEBRUARY 15 (ROME'S 3075), THERE WAS A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING THAT A) LABOR'S OFFER WAS PREDICATED ON A QUIDPRO QUO IN THE FORM OF GOVERNMENTAL ASSURANCES OF A PLAN TO ACHIEVE FULL EMPLOYMENT, AND B) LABOR'S CONCERN WAS NOT WITH THE MAKEUP, THE "FORMULA" OF THE GOVERNMENT, BUT WITH ITS PROGRAM. NOW, SAYS MACARIO, THE PROGRAM OF THE GOVERNMENT BEING FORMED "IS TO FORMULATE A PROGRAM". THIS ANGERS THE CISL AND UIL BUT LEAVES THE CGIL COMPLACENT. THE CGIL, IN ELABORATING A "PERSONAL" INTERPRETATION OF LABOR'S WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE IN AUSTERITY, "CONSIDERS THE 'QUID' AUTOMATICALLY ACCOMPLISHED BY THE ACHIEVEMENT OF COMMUNIST ENDS IN THE RESOLUTION OF THE POLITICAL CRISIS," MACARIO CHARGES.

8. MACARIO ASSERTS THAT "THE CGIL TENDS TO POLITICIZE EVERYTHING--IT HAS A VIRTUALLY MESSIANIC TRUST IN POLITICAL PROPOSALS, WHEREAS WE RELY ON CONTRACTUAL BARGAINING WHICH WE WILL NOT RENOUNCE". THE CGIL HAS SHOWN A WILLINGNESS "TO BE EXPLOITED...BY THE PCI, AND TO DELEGATE TO IT FUNCTIONS WHICH ARE STRICTLY THOE OF THE UNIONS", MACARIO CONTINUES. THE CISL STANDS FIRMLY BY THE OFFERS AGREED TO AT THE ROME/EUR MEETING, "BUT THESE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CANNOT BE TRADUCED FOR POLITICAL CONVENIENCE".

9. COMMENT. PROBABLY THE MOST INTERESTING ASPECT OF THE MOUNTING ACCUSATIONS AGAINST THE CGIL IS THE WIDE MIX OF NON-COMMUNIST PERSONALITIES WHO ARE OPENLY INVOLVED, FROM SARTORI ON THE RIGHT TO CARNITI ON THE LEFT. UIL

NATIONAL SECRETARY BUTTINELLI HAS TOLD US THAT THERE IS WIDESPREAD IRRITATION AND ALARM THROUGHOUT CISL AND UIL RANKS AT THE "FLAGRANCY" OF THE PCI/CGIL MANIPULATION OF THE CCU, AND THAT LABOR UNITY IS DUE FOR A THOROUGH REASSESSMENT. THE FACT OF VIRTUALLY INDISTINGUISHABLE IDENTITY BETWEEN THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND ITS LEADING LABOR MOVEMENT INSTRUMENT CANNOT BE A SURPRISE TO EVEN THE CASUAL OBSERVER. OBVIOUSLY, IT IS THE TRANSPARENCY OF THIS ASSOCIATION, IN THE CURRENT SITUATION, MAKING THE CISL AND UIL APPEAR FOOLISH IN THE PROCESS, THAT IS A MAJOR FACTOR IN MOTIVATING SO MANY TO GIVE VENT TO THEIR FEELINGS. GARDNER

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